

Lancaster, January 4th, 1802. Honorable Sir. The following is a copy of an anonymous piece, without date, addressed— “Mr. Francis Bailey, State printer, Lancaster.”— Delivered by the Sergeant-at-arms of the House of Representatives on the 31st December ult. about 11 'clock. “Whereas the chief benefits arising from printing the Journals of the House of representatives for the use of the members is in a great measure lost when they are not delivered to the respective members until the different reports and resolutions therein contained are acted on by the House so it would also frustrate the intention of the Legislature should the printing of the bills for the use of the members be delayed until they are passed ... The printer forgives the author of the above piece ... Francis Bailey. [Lancaster Pa. Francis Bailey, 1802].

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Honorable Sir,

THE following is a copy of an anonymous piece, without date, addressed—“ *Mr. Francis Bailey, State Printer, Lancaster,* ”—Delivered by the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Representatives, on the 31st December ult. about 11 o'clock.

“ Whereas the chief benefit arising from printing the Journals of the House of Representatives for “the use of the members is in a great measure lost when they are not delivered to the respective members “until the different reports and resolutions therein contained are acted on by the House so it “would also frustrate the intention of the Legislature should the printing of the Bills for the use of “the members be delayed until they are passed.

“ And as we find the proceedings of Congress at the city of Washington find their way through the “city of Philadelphia to the borough of Lancaster in less time than the Journals of the House of Representatives “to their members from the printing-office nearest the State-house Therefore

“ Resolved that it be recommended to the next Legislature to have their Journals printed at Pittsburgh “or Washington city in order that they may be received by the members as seasonably as “the business of Congress generally has been. ”

The motive of the writer, is too obvious to need comment—with respect to the effect it would have on the interest of the printer to the House of Representatives, it is impossible to mistake.

Whether the writer be a member of the House of Representatives or not, the printer will not undertake to say: From his comparison of the proceedings of Congress, and the Journals of the House of Representatives, he is inclined to suppose he is not, otherwise he might have known, that the debates of the former, is taken by a stenographer, from the mouth of a member this hour, may be in a newspaper the next, and the third on its way " *to Lancaster via "Philadelphia.* " On enquiry, the clerk of the latter, his assistant or the transcriber, could have informed him, that the Journal of the House of Representatives, which are not to be copied before they are read in the House, on the subsequent day; then to be transcribed, read, compared, and delivered to the printer, which commonly takes place on the third or fourth day after the transaction in the House. From these facts, he thinks every candid mind, will see the unfairness of the comparison, the unkindness of the insinuation, and inference.

Had he consulted the printer, he could have told him, the Journal is then to be set and corrected, afterwards a clean proof to be taken, should that happen at the hour of 10, 11, or 12 o'clock at night—that sheet must be compared by the committee for correcting the Journal at press, this cannot be done before next day; then the corrections or alterations directed by them are to be made, before the sheet can be put to press—much delay however, is seldom experienced, either from this cause, or a want of access to some member of the committee; but it sometimes unavoidably happens. The copy of the Minutes of Wednesday, the 23d December ult. were not received by the printer, until Thursday the 31st ult. at 4 o'clock, P. M. ^{*} This does not make one page, and until the printer has three other pages, it will be impossible for him to furnish a sheet; such cases often occur, and the printer is charged with delinquency, which no power on earth could prevent, but the House of Representatives of the State of Pennsylvania.

* It would be injustice in the printer, not to say, that so far as has come to his knowledge, he believes the clerk and his assistant, have neither designed, or caused any delay that was avoidable—with respect to Mr. Fortune, the transcribing clerk, from whom he receives the copy, he considers the most expert, correct and obliging officer, he ever knew perform that duty.

From the concurrence of the foregoing circumstances, and the ebbing and flowing of matter in the Journal, which some days exceed others, from ten, to more than fifty fold, the printer is at times idle; at other times—nights and weeks pass, without bringing either sleep or Sundays to the workmen, in order to furnish your Minutes with all possible promptitude.

Knowing the tenure on which he possesses your favour, to be punctuality, expedition and correctness—A wish to prevent an undue bias to his prejudice, has led him to state these essential and accidental causes of delay, incident to the publication of your Journal.

The printer forgives the author of the above piece;—and only asks from you, that degree of justice you would desire to be rendered to yourself, were an attempt made, to injure you in the opinion of an employer.

And has, the honor to be, sir, your obliged humble servant, FRANCIS BAILEY.

Francis Bailey

Hon I. Stacy

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